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ABSTRACT

Women's participation in school administration is low and actually declining, despite legislation, affirmative action, and special programs. This article views the research guiding educational policy as useful, but concerned with ancillary issues. After a literature review of sex discrimination, administrator gender differences, role conflicts, and norms favoring men, this article addresses the informal criteria and organizational processes that favor men and hinder women. It describes a retrospective, ethnographic study of 25 women in educational administration careers. Data analysis reveals three career development stages. Women administrators begin as culturally defined, molding identities, behaviors, attitudes, and choices according to society's expectations. (In a school environment, this means women remain teachers, and administrators are male.) If women teachers develop supports and incentives, they may pass through transition (a difficult resocialization process) and eventually become self-defined, competent, and placed in higher administrative positions. Analyzing women's careers according to organizational socialization theory provides useful perspectives for rethinking assumptions and formulating new questions. Besides showing women where the informal barriers lie, this theory shows policymakers and university-based educators what structures need alteration. Appended are 34 reference notes. (HLM)

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FROM CULTURALLY DEFINED TO SELF-DEFINED:

CAREER STAGES OF WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS

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Abstract

This article begins with a literature review which establishes the need for research which neither asks "what's wrong with women; why don't they aspire?" nor "who are the bad guys and how are they discriminating unfairly?" Instead research must ask "what are the salient organizational socialization processes which enable people to move up in administration and how do these processes affect women?" It then describes an ethnographic study designed to address this question. The study was of 25 women in educational administration careers. The research revealed three stages crucial to mobility into the highest administrative positions. Women must move from being Culturally Defined through Transition to being Self-Defined.

Women's participation in the school administration career continues to be low despite legislation, affirmative action plans and special programs. This article argues that the research which has thus far guided policy is limited by the questions it has addressed, thereby resulting in inadequate solutions to complex problems. The article then describes a study designed to address gaps in previous research.

Review of the Literature

Incomplete Answers from Limited Questions

Studies on women in school administration have most often addressed one of the following sets of questions: (1) Are women discriminated against? How? (2) Are women different from men in the administrator role? How? How does this affect their participation in the school administrative career? (3) Do women in administrative careers experience role conflict? What is the nature and effect of this conflict? (4) Are there norms which favor men in the school administrative career? What are they?

The following review of the literature uses these sets of questions as organizing points for discussion.

The first body of research has asked: Are women discriminated against? How? It has shown that superintendents, school boards, and teachers prefer male administrators,[1] that the "old boy's network" promotes men since predominantly white male administrators and university professors spread the word to aspiring men about upcoming job openings,[2] and that hiring practices unfairly discriminate against women.[3] This research has influenced the implementation of laws, regulations, and institutional policy which seek to address unfair practices by requiring adequate searches, job advertising, and formal and fair

selection procedures.[4] However, the number of women in higher administrative positions is declining. This suggests that the assumption that the only problem is discrimination in hiring and promotion is an oversimplification.

A second body of research on women has focused on differences between men and women in the administrative career. It has asked: "What is different about women that makes them less likely to aspire to and prepare for administration?" This research has shown that women administrators are different from men in their orientations to the administrative role and in their skills. They are more likely to spend time improving instruction. Women principals outscore men in ability to work with teachers and outsiders and they possess greater knowledge of teaching techniques. Mickish reviewed studies of women as principals which showed that women are more democratic, more friendly and sympathetic to teachers, more favorable to curriculum change, more adept at problem solving, more attuned to individual student differences, and no more inclined to worry or be concerned about petty matters than men.[5] Also teachers perform better under women superiors, students achieve better in schools with women principals and teachers, and parents who have experienced women principals prefer women over men. The specific leadership qualities of female elementary principals cause higher levels of job satisfaction in their male and female teachers and teachers working under female principals say that their principals are more influential in the educational affairs of the school.[6] And yet, the number of women principals remains disappointing despite this evidence of their desirability. Clearly this research approach does not fully explain what happens in school systems.

Other studies have explored differences between men and women administrators by asking: "Do women earn the required credentials?" Twenty-eight per cent of

educational administrative doctorates are held by women.[7] The number of doctorates in educational administration and supervision earned by women increased from an average of 8 per cent over the years 1920-1952 to 28 per cent in 1979.[8] A survey of Los Angeles credentials-holders showed that far more women than men hold the credentials without holding an administrative position and a California study revealed that 49 per cent of California administrative credentials were earned by women in 1975-76.[9] So, a large pool of qualified, certified women exists but they do not move into administrative positions.

Generally, research on career experience shows that career patterns of men and women differ. Studies have shown the tendency for women to develop expertise in areas such as elementary reading, curriculum, and early childhood education, instruction and central office staff positions.[10] Women not only enter administration later and less frequently, but they also move at slower paces. Most importantly, women have two common career paths--one which culminates with the elementary principalship and one which leads to higher levels of increasing specialization in staff positions. Women who move into line positions which lead to superintendencies are rare.

Numerous studies have pointed out that there are fewer career enticements for women than men. Research has shown that women administrators in higher positions, and in line rather than staff positions, are far more likely than men to be single.[11] Women administrators also receive less pay than men.[12] Several studies show that women's aspiration for administrative careers declines the more they see of administrative career patterns. Dias[13] showed that women's initially high aspirations for administration become lower as they assess their likelihood of obtaining a position. Nixon and Gue[14] and many other studies have found that women do not believe that education provides equal opportunity for women to move into administration. This perception creates a chilling

effect on aspiration formation. Ortiz[15] found that women teachers who express aspiration for administrative careers risk negative sanctions and have difficulty getting tenure.

The studies which identify the differences between the career experiences of men and women in education careers are useful baseline information. However, they must not be seen as presenting a total picture of women in school administration.[16]

Another body of research has asked: "How do female socialization and cultural stereotypes affect women's entry into administration?" These studies detail the existence of organizational expectations that men will manage and that women will teach.[17] They point out the need for training and encouragement for moving into administration and they document the extra strain which women encounter as they seek this support. In spite of the role strain many women move into administrative careers by obtaining extra training in finance and community relations, by adopting a serious professional demeanor and by earning extra credentials. However, these women still do not move as quickly nor as far in administrative careers as do men. Sex role socialization and role conflict explanations alone do not explain why so few women move into and up in administrative careers.

Deeper Understanding from Expanded Questions

Perhaps the most promising research has focused on the questions: "Where do the informal criteria which favor men come from? What organizational processes hinder women?" This focus in useful because it looks at the organization structures and their differential impact on women. (For example, the informal sponsor-protégé relationship is a crucial training mechanism in the educational administration career which generally excludes women.)[18] Such a focus enables the identification of organizational factors which serve as

barriers to the entry and mobility of women. Since people create organizations, they can also change organizations. They can devise policies and programs which eliminate organizational barriers.

The study discussed in the following section was designed to integrate research on organizational processes, on the school administrative career and on women's career development.

The specific research question was, "What in the career environment of schools affects the decisionmaking of women to aspire to and succeed in administrative careers and conversely, what in the career environment deters women from making the decision?" An underlying assumption of this question is that women's lack of access to appropriate socialization structures in the organization has the effect of depriving them of incentive and compentency-building structures. As a result, most women will not qualify for nor seek administrative careers.

Career socialization theory provided the framework for viewing the women's career orientation formation as the interplay of personal orientation and career environment supports and incentives with people making situational adjustments of attitudes and behaviors through task learning and through exposure to the career norms.[19] Key elements of career socialization theory include: (1) informal socialization and support; (2) sponsor-protégé relationships; (3) separation; and (4) incorporation. If aspirants share organizational space and similar backgrounds with members of the group to which they aspire, they may gain access to informal socialization and sponsorship from members of that group; they have support through difficult periods in training and advice about appropriate career ladder steps.[20] Through sponsored mobility, protégés get individualized training for fulfilling career norms, and for gaining incorporation in the career group. They get continued expert advice for career strategiz-

ing. Sponsorship facilitates the aspirant's separation from old status, training, and incorporation in a new status.[21] Aspirants must show identification and loyalty to the new group. If they are perceived to fill the norms, they may attain a position and the potential for mobility in the career. If they do not appear to fill the norms, they are "marginal men."[22]

Findings: The organizational Context of Women's Decisionmaking Socialization in Administration

Data analysis of interviews with 25 women school administrators revealed three stages in their career development. They begin as Culturally Defined, that is, they mold their identities, behaviors, attitudes, and choices according to the expectations of society (see page 12). Women administrators form their career orientations in a career environment where the expectation is that they will remain as teachers and that administrators are male.[23] In addition, they are filling many roles which they have learned as part of their female socialization. As a result, women face hurdles and disincentives due to (1) unequal access to salient socialization processes, and (2) female career-role strain. If they have supports and incentives they may progress through Transition--a difficult socialization process--and become Self-Defined--comfortable, competent and placed in higher administrative positions. The following sections detail the interplay between organizational structures and women's process of aspiration formation and mobility in the career.

Unequal Access to Organizational Socialization

When a woman enters a male sex-typed career, she defines norms and becomes an exception to the usual pattern for informal socialization. The socialization patterns set the odds against an aspiring woman. She forms a career orientation where there are few supports or incentives. Some of the salient task

learning opportunities are not open to her; many of the career norms are male-appropriate.[24]

Aspiring school administrators may meet formal job requirements by acquiring relevant training and credentials and by performing tasks and functions. These requirements may include serving as department chairman, chairing committees, coaching, attending university courses, earning a doctorate and acquiring abilities in managing district-community relations, managing interpersonal relations, interpreting laws, or implementing district-wide programs. In order to be upwardly mobile, administrators must develop: (1) a working knowledge of the functions in other areas; (2) the ability to set goals for subordinates in various functions to achieve system-wide, coordinated, long-term goals and develop plans for achievement; (3) the foresight to anticipate problems and assertively prepare solutions; (4) the ability to effectively train others and delegate tasks.[25]

Professional training rarely builds these abilities, and tests cannot measure them.[26] It is the informal organizational structure for training, recruitment, testing, and promotion with which aspiring administrators must become familiar. These structures provide relevant experiences to meet the ambiguous or unstated criteria. For example, through informal interactions with other administrations, and role models, aspiring administrators learn to meet unstated criteria, acquire job-relevant training, and demonstrate to superiors their fit with other administrators.

In order to move up in administration, candidates must meet informal criteria developed with assumptions that administrators would be male, with an orientation to district management more than instructional leadership. They do the following:

1. separate from an orientation to children and teachers to develop a district-wide perspective,

2. develop an ability to manage community groups,
3. demonstrate an ability to manage crucial areas such as conflict, discipline, legal mandates, finance, maintenance--often the first step in this demonstration occurs during the vice-principalship.[27]
4. develop an ability to assertively draw attention to their own accomplishments and potential, by "Getting the Attention of Superiors" (GASing),[28]
5. comfortably joke and interact casually with fellow administrators,
6. develop an image of loyalty to the system and to fellow administrators, and present an image of a traditional family life, and
7. develop a leadership style which conforms to organizational norms.

The 25 women in this study had great difficulty meeting these criteria. Organizational norms and structures created barriers. The women were rewarded for caring about children and punished for separating themselves from them. They were seldom appointed to the committees and tasks which dealt with crucial district issues, perhaps because of a societal stereotype functioning to keep women out of positions which deal with discipline, conflict, finance and legal issues. Further, these women felt that they handled tasks like conflict management and discipline with a style that differs from men's. Their management style may be effective but not recognized.

The women had difficulty in developing expertise in community relations because they seldom had access to relevant political and social groups. When the women GASed they were seen as pushy, brassy and unfeminine. In addition, the women felt that male administrators were unaccustomed to working with women as colleagues and were uncomfortable when interacting with women who are serious, professional, and equal in status and expertise. Many found that they had to project an image which denied a personal life and which assertively

disproved stereotypes that women are uninterested in a career and would drop career concerns for family concerns. They had to carefully guard against accepting tasks which would keep them in women's roles, and guard against displays which could be seen as overemotional or "soft." However, their attempts to disprove stereotypes strengthened the image that they were deviants, that is, that they were not warm, caring women.

As they considered entering administration and faced these barriers, most of these women had little training to prepare them. They seldom shared organizational space or life experiences with male administrators; they seldom had role models. They seldom had access to the sponsor-protégé socialization since men and women are not accustomed to working as caring, supportive colleagues as in the sponsor-protégé relationship. Informal interactions between men and women may give the appearance of love or sexual relationships, thereby harming marriages and careers. Thus, the usual socialization patterns are not available to women. The women in this study had to find or create replacement socialization mechanisms. They expended extra time and energy doing so and often the replacements could not equal the career and emotional support, guidance and entrée provided by sponsorship. Formal training, special expertise and extra degrees were not enough. Mentors and role models were rare, and they seldom held enough power to help promote women. Thus the crucial informal processes--those which train and support men and which define the criteria for administration--were often not available to women.

Finally, the women knew they would not be judged as having the appropriate leadership style. Their adaptations to administrator roles differed from men's. Rosen and Jerdee[29] have shown that women's competence as leaders is judged subjectively by superiors, influenced by stereotypes about women as managers and by male norms for leaders and managers.

The women in this research faced organizational realities with little guidance, support, or incentives. They faced extra testing when others assumed that women could not conform to administrator norms; they experienced games-playing and manipulation; they faced isolation when they were excluded from informal interactions with male administrators.

The women considering the administrative career faced female career-role strain. The extra expenditure of time, thought, and energy required for training, for special task learning, and for displays of loyalty and commitment to the career conflicted with cultural definitions of women's roles. The career not only conflicts with their roles as wife, mother, and women-in-the-community, it also conflicts with societal definitions of feminine sexuality. Culturally Defined women are expected to support husbands careers, contribute to the community, find fulfillment through orientation to children. Their identities as women incorporate societal expectations that women should be attractive and pleasant, modest and passive. Administrator norms conflict with this feminine identity. The demands of the administrator role make it impossible for women to fill Culturally Defined women's roles too. Becoming an administrator requires a woman to find ways to redefine identity and roles to make the strain tolerable and manageable.

Transition

Women face this female career-role strain and lack of access to socialization during Transition. Their Culturally Defined career orientation is disrupted as they confront the career barriers. They increasingly rearrange their lives, feelings, and attitudes and they redefine themselves and their organizational roles so that they can be comfortable and competent administrators. This progression from Culturally Defined, through Transition, to Self-Defined must

occur for women to perform and move up in administrative hierarchy. In this research, no woman attained a high position and performed comfortably and competently without going through Transition. This section describes this powerful phase of women's career development.

During Transition, women face female career-role strain and the challenge to find access to a male sex-typed career. Women in Transition experience anxiety and anger and inner warring as they break away from cultural roles. They rebel against the unfairness, they resist the changes of identity while, at the same time, they feel the pull of the career. They feel the confusion and anxiety of Transition.

When supports are sufficient and incentives are strong, the women found ways to redefine their cultural conceptions of feminine roles in order to fill essential administrator and women's roles and to gain access to the administrator group.

They knew that a fun-loving, flirtatious demeanor and a certain appearance attracts men, but they must abandon that role and be serious and formal in demeanor and attire. Several women administrators spoke of fighting to resist "acting cute" and of having to "dress older." Redefining their sexuality was essential for these women to be seen as professionals and to gain acceptance as colleagues in the administrator group. Neutralizing sexuality lessens the ambiguity of intent that interferes with close interactions between men and women.

Women in Transition wage internal warfare as they search for ways to retain an essential female identity yet gain access to the administrator group and to sponsorship. If they maintain the attitudes and behaviors that identify them with other women, they avoid the Transition anxiety but they are not seen as committed professionals. During Transition, women search for a workable balance

of feminine identity and professionalism. They learn to live with being marginal women.[30]

Similarly, women during Transition search for techniques to manage the conflict between the wife, mother, woman-in-the-community roles and the administrator role. They find ways to buffer the guilt feelings for spending less time with their children, for entertaining less, for "selfishly" working on the career and not devoting energies to supporting their husbands' careers. During Transition, women find ways to balance, integrate, and discard roles.

Among the twenty-five women in the study, many faltered having few societal supports or role models for easing Transition. Certain organizational requirements exacerbated female career-role strain and women's lack of access. The pattern of informal interactions in sponsorship and in the administrator group accentuated the awkwardness of women as they attempted to fit in with the group, yet ability in informal interactions is among the unwritten criteria for administrative positions. GASing is essential for aspiring administrators to demonstrate competence, loyalty and commitment,[31] but Culturally Defined women denied any such conscious strategizing. However, women in Transition learned to see the need for GASing and found ways to see it as a game that does not compromise their ideals or their femininity.

Organizational realities increased the anxiety and undermined the motivation of women in Transition. All aspiring administrators must pass formal and informal testing for ability, commitment, loyalty, and adherence to organizational norms. The women had difficulty facing the informal testing for ability, loyalty, and fit where it was based on male-oriented criteria and when their prior socialization had not prepared them to strategize to face testing as a challenge.

The women endured extra testing; they had to allay the pervasive doubt that women belong in administration. Mrs. Brown's superintendent forced her to decide whether or not to take the junior high principalship without consulting her husband.[32] Dr. Howe recalled one "test";

> Everyone was looking at me, wondering if they should have another women principal. I felt I had to spank one child early on just to let parents and faculty know that I was strong as a man. I was very happy when it was over.

Many women internalized the organizational and societal doubt in their abilities in administration. During Transition, women had to face the realization that some teachers and colleagues will always prefer working with a man. They had to endure situations where their ideas were given less consideration than a man's and situations where a man confiscated their ideas and presented them as his own. Meanwhile, they had to demonstrate loyalty to colleagues and to the organization; they could not show anger over unfair treatment or complain about the male-oriented criteria for success in administration. On the contrary, they had to make extra displays of loyalty. Often they had to cultivate the relationship with the very people who had the most doubt in their competence when those people were powerful. To do otherwise, to strike out at the organization and to show bitterness, would be to earn the label of 'poor on interpersonal relations, oversensitive.' Women learn to see such realities as a game; they learn to play it during Transition.

Strong incentives could ease Transition. However, organizational patterns created strong disincentives for women administrators. No clear career ladder outlined steps which they could take to climb to rewarding positions. They noticed that booming deep voices, strong-arm discipline, coaching boys' sports, drinking and playing golf with men seem to be steps on the career ladder. Most importantly, they saw few women in administration, and fewer still in high

positions, so women entering and climbing in administration must live with isolation. During Transition, some of the women found ways to face these organizational realities that undermined their motivation.

The model of career development for women in male sex-typed careers and the special socialization of Transition contain useful concepts. These processes filter out women whose career environments provide insufficient support and incentive. The processes create vacillation, ambiguity, feelings of guilt and incompetence during aspiring women's Transition. The processes can slow down and even stop women's progression toward higher positions.

Explanations and Predictions for Women's Careers

Some women face Transition and retreat from it. They fill lower administrative positions, usually elementary principalships. They see themselves as head teachers, closely connected to children and service; larger concerns of the district and the profession are interferences. Women who do go through Transition become increasingly Self-Defined. They adjust roles, build substitutes for role expectations they cannot fill, build armor against discomfort with games-playing, GASing, strategizing. They find extra-organizational substitutes for vital career socialization or they create ways to maximize socialization experiences in their districts. They create and maintain support systems to manage female career role-strain and to alleviate marginal womanhood. Women cannot move into higher positions in administration until they approach self-definition. Transition is an essential process for mobility.

From analysis of the content of interviews and background information on these administrators, each could be placed in career development stages. Six women were classified as Culturally-Defined and nineteen as progressing through Transition or Self-Defined. The nineteen were gaining support, incentives, competencies, changing their personal lives to manage female career-role strain,

and assertively seeking and finding higher positions. The next section focuses on these nineteen women, identifying the effect of organizational structures on their ability to establish career competencies and gain access to higher positions.

Organizational Responses to Self-Defined Women

Of the Self-Defined women, seven were in high positions with a sense of competence and satisfaction with life and career. Each of these women recalled the traumas of Transition, the organizational resistance, the personal sacrifices and role adjustments, but found that the challenges and rewards of a high position compensated for the struggle. Mrs. Brown, a junior high principal, recalled the times when she had struggled alone when her husband did not want to hear about her work, but now she enjoys his involvement in her work world. Dr. Kelley recalled two years as high school principal in a rough district. She had nurtured a relationship with a reluctant sponsor. But she attained a superintendency so she felt the struggle had paid off. These women were able to gain sufficient access to socialization and to develop successful career-role strain management techniques. They became Self-Defined. It is significant that the women who had the closest thing to sponsorship were those in superintendent or assistant superintendent positions. Drs. Astin and Halpin, curriculum coordinator and middle school principal, respectively, and Ms. Bass, high school principal, had progressed through Transition and developed career orientations which had allowed them to move up in administration.

In contrast, twelve of the Self-Defined women had already encountered Transition and had developed appropriate attitudes, behaviors, life styles, and competencies for career mobility but predicted little chance of attaining challenging and satisfying positions for themselves. Continuing analysis of the

career opportunities for these twelve women, in the context of their organizational career environments, showed that the organization itself continued to inappropriately place women, continued norms which were formed with the expectation that administrators be males, young, and willing to sacrifice family roles for career mobility. Organizational structures, norms, and policies were preventing career mobility.

For example, Mrs. Murray felt that she was selected for her position because of affirmative action. Asked at the last moment to fill her high school's assistant principal position, she had to make fast adjustments to manage female career-role strain and perform according to administrator norms. Although she sought ways to be assertive and also sought guidance from a professor who showed the importance of well-defined job responsibilities, she was reluctant to give up her "feminine wiles," reluctant to evaluate "those men in industrial arts." But blunt application of affirmative action had placed her in a position without any socialization or supports. When the organization does nothing to support or train women as they go through Transition, it misuses affirmative action. When affirmative action policy fails to recognize the special socialization of Transition, it fails in the goal to promote and support women.

Eight other women filled lower positions even though they had gone through Transition and felt competent and eager for higher positions. Analysis of their experiences and situations revealed that organizational norms were holding them back. Dr. Gold recognized the career norm that staying too long in an elementary principalship would end chances for higher positions. She had earned her doctorate; however, she could find no strong organizational incentives or rewards in her district. in nearby districts, or in the university. She had endured the disapproval of neighbor women, risking her marriage for her job and her doctorate.

She hesitated to move her family and take on more responsibilities, "not because I'm a woman, but because I'm human."[33] Dr. Gold knew how to meet administrator norms but couldn't meet them without further sacrifice of rewarding female roles. Lacking societal or organizational incentives for mobility, Dr. Gold was in a frustrating holding pattern.

Ms. Wilson obtained her central office administrative positions when a new function was added to fill a state mandate. She had already sought administrative positions in other districts, finding that: "they all want someone with experience, and the only place you can get experience is in your own district. I thought they'd be looking for a woman, but it's a question of how hard they're looking." She had learned the necessity of GASing and university coursework. She had support from associating with other professional women and advice from male administrators. Yet she continued to have experiences where others undermined her by not recognizing her authority, by not taking her seriously, by expecting her to perform secretarial functions. More importantly she had little hope of moving to higher positions.

Mrs. Theodore and Mrs. Epstein worked in the same district as Ms. Wilson and had also acquired competencies and attitudes of Self-Defined women. They echoed the concern that "you have to wait till somebody dies" (Ms. Wilson) for an opening. Ms. Wilson, Mrs. Epstein, and Mrs. Theodore were Self-Defined, competent, ready to GAS, to take on extra responsibility, and ready to move up. Yet none were moving.

Mrs. Hamilton's career illustrates the impact of organizational norms as women face female career-role strain. She had to decide whether to pursue a doctorate, have a child, or seek higher administrative positions. She had supports and incentives which should lead to Self-Definition--completing her master's, getting hints that a vice-principalship might be open, getting

constant support from her husband. However, she faced the biological reality that she had to either have children soon or never have children. Organizational policies and administrator norms made it impossible to respond to the demands of having a small child and to fill any administrative position at the same time. Administrative norms require continuous commitment of time and displays of intense involvement.

Mrs. Ryan's career shows the impact of delaying the career. She postponed career involvement until her children were older, then entered administration as an elementary principal. She was receiving cues that higher positions were available if she should get her doctorate, but she was "pooped out." In her mid-forties, she might settle into the lower administrative position. That decision was traumatic for a woman who grew up knowing that "I could have been President of the United States if I tried." The administrator mobility requirement of involvement and extra training were difficult for her to face at her age. Current mothering and administrator roles are so incompatible that even Self-Defined women cannot find ways to manipulate, integrate, and find sufficient substitutes. Some women delay entry into the career until very "late" according to administrator norms. Some women administrators do not become mothers. We cannot tell how many mothers simply do not become administrators.

Dr. Peratis' career showed how changes in district policies, patterns of interaction, and priorities can have devastating effects on a woman's career. She had moved from elementary principal to assistant superintendent, progressing through Transition in a supportive career environment where interactions were formal and professional. Then her career environment changed with the new superintendent:

> They wanted a man of action; they chose a man with a record of rapid change. He was three to four years older than I; flashy, well-groomed, looking for and caring about his impact on women. Sex came into the situation. There was this crazy by-play. Because I'm formal . . . I wasn't a part of that. I was immune, not a part of that. Don't get me

> wrong. I'm an attractive person; but his fantasies and carrying on were with younger women teachers. Our professional association was changed. Men's room activities, from which women were excluded, became more important. This superintendent operates all over the field. There was no way I could cope, he did business at Rotary, with individual board members at lunch. I was excluded as assistant superintendent!
>
> There was more negative business about women going on while huge lip service was being given to encourage women. It was a sick environment. That is more common than anyone knows. That's the arena where women are being excluded."

The new superintendent was an outsider and Dr. Peratis, as assistant superintendent, accentuated his insecurity. He could not adjust to her as a colleague. Within two years she was demoted to the same principalship where she had started her career.

Three other Self-Defined women in higher positions remained marginal women, unable to integrate some aspects of female career-role strain and unable to gain complete access and incorporation in the administrator group. Dr. Howe, curriculum director in a large district, was isolated; the male administrators and their families saw each other socially but she and her family were never invited. There were few women administrators in her district. The tone of the informal interaction among administrators made it impossible for Dr. Howe to integrate her wife-and-administrator roles.

Ms. Weiss was the only female central office administrator in her district. Since she entered administration as a divorced woman with a small child, and as personnel director in a declining enrollment district, she had tough challenges in managing career-role strain and in facing organizational realities. She could manage the work, but motherhood and femininity issues were still problematic. The workload, the evening meetings, the need to get her doctorate conflicted too much with her role as a single parent. The need to neutralize sexuality and to emphasize professionalism conflicted with male-female relationships.

Dr. Cooper was a marginal woman too. She had little chance of entering administration in her district[34] and administrator age norms pressed:

> You've got to go through all the steps . . . they want assistant principals to be full of energy and ideas. You can be a principal after age fifty, but not an assistant principal.

At age forty-two, Dr. Cooper took a high school assistant principal position two hundred miles from home, commuting back to her husband and children on some weekends. This job move appeared to be an active pursuit of marginal womanhood.

Drs. Howe and Cooper and Ms. Weiss faced administrator norms concerning the appropriate age for positions, amount of hours and commitment required, and the organizational realities that women's opportunities are limited and some women's roles just cannot be integrated with administrator roles.

Rethinking Assumptions about Women in Administration

The difficulties of Transition may be seen as a part of the organizational reality for women. Organizational norms and socialization processes place aspiring women in marginal social status. Underutilization of women in administration continues as organizational socialization processes create barriers to aspiring women.

This analysis of women's careers, within the framework of organizational socialization theory provides useful perspectives for rethinking and formulating new questions. The research described in this paper does not ask, "what's wrong with women; why don't they aspire?" Nor does it ask, "who are the bad guys and how are they discriminating unfairly?" Instead it asks, "what are the salient organizational socialization processes which enable people to move up in administrative careers and how do these processes affect women?" In doing so, it identifies organizational structures, norms, policies, role definitions, interaction patterns, and attitudes which tend to exclude women from administrative careers. It shows women where the informal barriers lie, but, more importantly,

It shows policymakers and university-based educators who train and certify administrators, that there are structures in the schools, in institutions, and in the profession that unfairly reduce women's career chances. These structures could be altered and/or replacement socialization supports could be devised. Most importantly, the research shows the importance of redefining the problem, rethinking the assumptions and expanding the theory to guide research and policy on women in educational administration.

Notes

[1]See particularly P. Schmuck, Sex Differentiation in Public School Administration (Washington: National Council of Administrative Women in Education, 1975); S. Taylor, "The Attitudes of Superintendents Toward the Employment and Effectiveness of Women as Public School Administrators," in A. Fishel and J. Pottker, (eds.) Sex Bias in the Schools: The Research Evidence (New Jersey: Associated Presses, 1977); and M. G. Neidig, "Women Applicants for Administrative Positions: Attitudes Held by Administrators and School Board," Dissertation Abstracts International, 1973, 34, 2982-2983A.

[2]P. M. Timpano and L. W. Knight illustrate this in their article, Sex Discrimination in the Selection of School District Administrators: What Can be Done? (Washington, D.C.: NIE, 1976).

[3]See particularly Roslyn Kane, Sex Discrimination in Education: A Study of Employment Practices Affecting Professional Personnel, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of HEW, ERIC 132743, 1976); S. Howard, Why Aren't Women Administrators in Our Schools: The Status of Women Public School Teachers and the Factors Hindering Their Promotion into Administration (National Council of Administrative Women in Education, 1975); D. Muhich, "Discrimination Against Women in Educational Administration," paper presented at the meeting of the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors, Chicago, 1973; and D. Coursen, "Women and Minorities in Administration" (School Leadership Digest, June, 1975, 1-26).

[4]C. Marshall and R. Grey, ("Legal Rights of Women Seeking Administrative Positions in Local School Districts," Journal of Educational Equity and Leadership, forthcoming) have detailed these requirements.

[5]See G. Mickish, "Can Women Function as Successfully as Men in the Role of Elementary Principal?" (Research Reports, II, 4, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, 1971); N. Gross and A. E. Trask, The Sex Factor and the Managment of

Schools (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976); John K. Hemphill, Daniel E. Griffiths and Norman Frederickson, Administrative Performance and Personality (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962); and Mickish, ibid.

[6]See the study by W. W. Charters, Jr. and T. D. Jovick. "The Gender of Principal/Teacher Relations in Elementary Schools," in P. Schmuck, W. W. Charters, Jr. and R. Carlson (eds.) Educational Policy and Management: Sex Differentials (New York: Academic Press, 1981).

[7]See National Advisory Council of Women's Educational Programs, Title IX: The Half Full, Half Empty Glass (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981).

[8]Ibid.

[9]See T. Barnes, "America's Forgotten Minority: Women School Administrators," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, April, 1976, and Legislative Analyst, The School Principal (Sacramento: State of California, 1977).

[10]For an extensive, theory-guided study for career patterns, see F. I. Ortiz, Career Patterns in Education: Men, Women and Minorities in Public School Administration (New York: J. F. Praeger, 1982).

[11]See Paddock, ibid. and M. Nixon and L. R. Gue, "Women Administrators and Women Teachers: A Comparative Study," The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 21, 3, September, 1975.

[12]Paddock's (ibid.) study, and national statistics, have shown this to be true consistently.

[13]See S. Dias, "The Aspiration Levels of Women for Administrative Careers in Education: Predictive Factors and Implications for Effecting Change," paper delivered at the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April, 1976; ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 119 376).

[14]See Nixon and Gue, ibid.

[15]See Ortiz, ibid.

[16]Aspiration and career decisionmaking must be seen as a complex interaction between an individual, the career, and the organization. Holland (J. L. Holland, "A Theory of Vocational Choice," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1959, 6, 35-45) tells us that aspiration formation is a long process during which a person looks at the career requirements and his/her own qualities, motivations and chances. The person forms aspirations and makes career decisions during this process. Thus, aspiration is formed through and within the context set by the career stereotype and the organizational structure. Long-Laws (J. Long-Laws, "Work Aspiration of Women: False Leads and New Starts," in M. Blaxall and B. Reagan (eds.) Women in the Workplace (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976)) makes this point by describing motivation as tempered by opportunity for success.

[17]For a more complete description see C. Marshall, "Career Socialization of Women in School Administration," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, 1979. Merton (R. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (London: Free Press, 1964)) has identified and described sex structuring and organizational expectations.

[18]Valverde (L. Valverde, Succession Socialization: Its Influence on School Administrative Candidates and its Implications to the Exclusion of Minorities from Administration (Washington: National Institute of Education, 1974; ERIC Document Reproduction Service, No. ED 093 052)) and Marshall (ibid.) have detailed this sponsor-protégé process in administration.

[19]Theorists whose work guided this conceptualization include J. L. Holland (ibid.), Howard S. Becker ("Personal Change in Adult Life," Sociometry, 27, March, 1964, 40-53), D. Breer and E. Locke (Task Experiences as a Source of Attitudes, Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1965), D. T. Hall ("A Theoretical Model of Career Sub-identity Development in Organizational Settings," Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 1971, 6, 50-76), and A. K. Korman ("Toward a Hypothesis of Work Behavior," Journal of Applied Psychology, 1970, 54, 31-41).

[20]The work of Valverde (ibid.), F. I. Ortiz ("The Process of Professional Incorporation," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1972) and R. H. Turner ("Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System," American Sociological Review, 25, 1960, 855-867) explicate this informal process.

[21]Sponsors are the powerful and knowledgeable persons who guide the person through the processes of separating from the teacher group, getting the appropriate training, and inclusion in the administrator group. This process parallels A. Van Gennep's (Rites of Passage, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) concepts of "rites of passage" applied to organizations, except that important structures, like sponsorship, are informal.

[22]Merton (ibid.) described the marginal man as the person who aspires to a new position or status, separates from his original group, but never gains inclusion in the new group.

[23]This becomes a normative expectation when the preponderance of administrators have been and continue to be male.

[24]There are unstated expectations that certain activities (such as coaching boys' sports) and attitudes (such as the willingness to make career mobility a higher priority than family) are essential for administrators and are exhibited primarily by males.

[25]The essentials have been shown by Robert L. Katz ("Skills of an Effective Administrator," Harvard Business Review, January-February, 1955, 33-42), M. Hennig and A. Jardim (The Managerial Woman, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), and P. Hersey and K. H. Blanchard (Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources, 3rd Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977).

[26]Literature on administrator training finds no correlation between administrator success and number of courses in administration.

[27]L. Criswell ((ed.), Socialization and Training Into School Administrative Roles, unpublished paper, University of California, Riverside, 1976), among others, has made this point.

[28]D. E. Griffiths, S. Goldman and W. J. McFarland ("Teacher Mobility in New York City," Educational Administration Quarterly, 1965, 1, 15-31) identified the process called GASing whereby aspiring school administrators take on extra tasks, demonstrate motivation, loyalty, and suitability to Get the Attention of Superiors.

[29]B. Rosen and T. H. Jerdee, "Sex Stereotyping in the Executive Suite," Harvard Business Review, 1974, 52, 45-48.

[30]I use this term to denote a special case of Merton's (ibid.) "marginal man." Marginal man separates from his original reference group to aspire to a new group but he cannot gain inclusion. Marginal woman separates from her normative reference group of Culturally Defined women but there is no new group of Self-Defined women in higher administrative jobs. There is no group to join.

[31]Griffiths (ibid.).

[32]Each research subject was given a fictitious name.

[33]Dr. Gold's remark points out the need to re-examine the effects of administrator norms and duties on family life, health, and ability to remain human.

[34]She had been a teacher in the same district as Mrs. Theodore, Mrs. Epstein, and Mrs. Bennis and she agreed with their perception that few administrative positions would be opening up. She applied elsewhere.